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ABSTRACT

Part of the Keynote Series, this book examines catechesis, which is the proclamation and teaching of Catholic doctrine. Among the book's uses are: (1) a resource in preservice information programs for Catholic school teachers; (2) graduate preparation of Catholic school administrators; (3) a resource for teacher in-service and boards of education; and (4) for personal and professional growth of individual Catholic educators. The chapters include: "Catechesis: Sharing the Message"; "The Maturing Believer--A Person Who is on the Way"; "The Catechist: Called To Be and To Do"; "The Faculty in the Catholic School: Called To Be and Become a Prophetic Community"; "Home, School, Parish and Community: Called To Be Partners"; "Liturgical Programs in the Catholic School: Moments of Preparation and Celebration"; "The Method: Means to Understanding and Response"; and "A Magnificent Mosaic: Catechetical Programs in the Catholic School--Cognitive and Affective Objectives." The book also includes resources, annotated bibliography, and suggested ways to use the book. (TRS)

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NCEA Keynote Series No. 10

CATECHETICS IN THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Father James F. Hawker

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CATECHETICS IN THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Father James F. Hawker

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PREFACE

The NCEA Keynote Series is made possible by a grant from the Michael J. McGivney Fund. This fund for new initiatives in Catholic education came through the generosity of the Knights of Columbus under the leadership of Virgil C. Dechant, Supreme Knight.

The Reverend Russell M. Bleich, Superintendent of Education in the Diocese of Dubuque, Iowa, made the original suggestion for preservice and inservice materials for teachers. Thanks are due the authors of this series, to the staff of the Education Office of the Archdiocese of Dubuque for the practical application section of each booklet.

Special thanks go to Ms. Eileen Torpey, the major editor of the series. The editorial committee consists of the Reverend J. Stephen O'Brien, Executive Director of the Department of Chief Administrators of Catholic Education, Sister Carleen Reck, Executive Director of the Elementary School Department, and Michael J. Guerra, the Executive Director of the Secondary School Department.

1. CATECHESIS: SHARING THE MESSAGE

The Mission of the Church

One of the truly memorable experiences of my life occurred at the time of my graduation from high school. Although I cannot recall the name of the person who addressed the graduates, I have never forgotten the advice shared with me by my parents at the conclusion of the ceremony. They said, "Remember your roots. Remember you are what you are because others have loved you. Remember you are related, dependent and responsible. Remember your roots."

An essential dimension of the mission of Jesus Christ and his church is to assist maturing believers to remember their roots. And in remembering, to stretch ourselves toward the fullness of God's reign. Jesus Christ was sent by the Father as a sign of his faithful caring presence, to announce, serve and share the kingdom, and to invite persons to walk in his way, to accept his truth, to mature in his life. The church was instituted by the risen Christ to accept and share his person and message, his life and love. In fulfilling its purpose, the church serves as Christ's body, forming the future, continuing in time and place the work begun by Jesus. Created for his work, the church teaches as Jesus did.

Throughout its history, the church has participated in the mission of the risen Lord by cultivating three interrelated ministries: the ministry of the word, the ministry of worship and the ministry of service.[1] Catechesis is an integral component of the ministry of the word. The aim of catechesis is "to assist the believer's faith to become living, conscious and active through the light of instruction."[2]

The Message of Catechesis

Catechesis both proclaims and teaches the word of God. It proclaims the good news that Jesus is Lord. It teaches the central truth of faith that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that we might have life through Him" (1 John 4:9).

Catechesis is God-centered. The Christian message is basically that of the Father's love. God the Father sent his Son to become one of us. Through his Son, the Father calls and enables each of us to union with him. Catechesis is Christ-centered. The Christian message is that Jesus Christ is our Savior and Redeemer. He calls us to be converted to him as Lord so that in union with him we might return to the Father. Catechesis is person-centered. The Christian message is directed to the believer in the concrete circumstances of life and invites the person to respond to God's love by entering into a relationship with God that matures in depth and commitment.

All other truths taught by the church are related to the message that Jesus Christ, true God and true man, exercised his saving ministry in his birth, life, death and resurrection. This salvific action leads us to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit.

Evangelization and Catechesis

Evangelization, like catechesis, is an integral component of the ministry of the word.[3] Like catechesis, it proclaims the good news that Jesus is Lord. However, its purpose is to arouse the beginnings of faith. In sharing the good news, its goal is to be catalytic in arousing an initial interior change or conversion. Catechesis, as a moment in the whole process of evangelization, seeks to mature the initial faith and to educate the believer by means of a deeper and more systematic knowledge of the person and message of the Lord Jesus Christ. Through teaching and instruction, catechesis assists people to appreciate the wonder and significance of the good news, which the activity of evangelization proclaims. In exercising their ministry,

catechists invite maturing believers to hear and understand, accept and appropriate God's word and to respond in acts of celebration and service.

While it is true that evangelization and catechesis fulfill specific purposes, Pope John Paul II, in *On Catechesis in Our Time*, observes that some who are involved in receiving catechetical instruction have not experienced or responded to the initial evangelization. Two of the examples offered by Pope John Paul are particularly pertinent. He refers to the child who has been baptized as an infant but has not received any other initiation into the faith and has no explicit attachment to Christ. Then too, he makes note of the adolescent who, although having been involved in catechetical instruction, has hesitated to make a commitment to Jesus Christ. The Holy Father, in recognizing these and similar realities, states, "This means that 'catechesis' must concern itself not only with nourishing and teaching faith, but also with arousing it unceasingly with the help of grace, with opening the heart, with converting, and with preparing total adherence to Jesus Christ on the part of those who are still on the threshold of faith. This concern will in part decide the tone, the language and the method of catechesis."[4]

Revelation and Faith

If the goal of catechesis is to be realized on any level in a contemporary manner, it is essential to understand the nature of divine revelation and faith. One might approach these realities from two points of view.[5]

Revelation may be described as a body of truths revealed by God. These truths were shared with the human family in the Old and New Testaments. The body of revealed truths was completed in apostolic times. Faith, in this view, is mainly an intellectual assent to the revealed doctrines. This assent is based upon the authority of God who is the source of these truths.

A complementary understanding of revelation and faith has become more prominent since the time of Vatican II. This view describes revelation as a process in which God

primarily communicates himself, and not simply information about himself and his plan for our salvation. This is a more personal approach. The participation of the person and the community in this loving communion is integral to the notion of revelation. This view recognizes that revelation looks both to the past and the present. God continues to reveal himself, to manifest his caring presence, in the experience of individual Christians and in the experience of the community of believers.

Contemporary catechesis is shaped significantly by the complementary nature of the views of revelation and faith. Without question, catechesis must be committed to sharing the revealed truths with the maturing believer. At the same time, however, catechesis should assist believers to be conscious of and responsive to the signs of the living God in their lives. Catechesis, then, guides believers to discover the various aspects of the Christian mystery as integrated in their own life experiences.

The Signs of Catechesis

The National Catechetical Directory lists four signs for catechesis[6] and indicates that each of these signs point to the self-communication of God in the world. These signs are classified under four general headings: biblical signs, liturgical signs, ecclesial signs and natural signs.

Biblical Signs—The term refers to the many events and experiences recorded in scripture, within which God revealed himself. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the authors of the Bible recorded the impact of God's action upon his people. The Bible is the word of God in the sense that it unfolds what God's word has done and been in human history. The Bible is the word of God in another sense because through these inspired writings, God addresses his word to the believer today. Through the Bible, God speaks to believers and invites them to answer him by a loving response to his call.

Catechesis seeks to make biblical signs better understood so that people may appreciate and appropriate the message

of the Bible more fully. Catechesis encourages people to meditate on the Bible and to cultivate a biblical spirituality. Catechesis stimulates informed and active participation in the liturgy by assisting people to recognize and understand the biblical themes and language that are incorporated in the readings and sacramental rites. Catechesis reflects continually on the biblical signs in order to penetrate their meaning more deeply.

Liturgical Signs—Just as Jesus Christ employed signs to manifest his bond of unity and love with the people of his day, he continues to reveal his saving presence today through the actions of the liturgy. If the liturgy is to be an effective sign for maturing believers, it must be viewed as the saving action of the risen Christ made present today.

An aim of catechesis is to prepare persons and communities for an active and fruitful celebration of the liturgy. Catechesis focuses upon the deeper meaning of liturgical words and actions. Catechesis explains the manner in which liturgical signs reveal Christ's presence in the church today.

Ecclesial Signs—These are grouped under two headings in the *National Catechetical Directory*: doctrinal and creedal formulations, and the witness of Christian living.

The creeds and doctrines that state the church's belief are expressions of the living tradition that has developed since apostolic times. The role of doctrine is to set down the church's teaching in simple, clear propositions. Doctrine bridges the gap between revelation as contained in scripture and continuous new insights of succeeding generations. Doctrine might be described as the explanation, definition, refinement and development of the meaning of Christ as presented by the teaching church. Catechesis includes doctrine with the intention of assisting believers to understand more clearly the meaning of Christianity in their lives. Because the life of the church is dynamic and alive, doctrine should not be viewed simply as a series of statements about the faith that remain fixed and unchanged. Rather, doctrines have been declared in various centuries. For an ever-changing world, the church is responsible for faithfully interpreting in different cultures and times the good news announced by Jesus. Such being the case, contemporary

catechesis is to present the teachings of Vatican II as the present-day thinking of the church on doctrinal matters.

Not only do doctrinal and creedal formulations comprise the ecclesial signs, the church itself is a sacrament of the risen Lord and as such, its whole life is a sign for catechesis. The life of the church includes its nature as a community, its expression of worship, its dedication to service, and the message through which it articulates its faith.

Natural Signs—God reveals himself through creation, through persons and through cultures. These are natural signs of God's presence. An essential aspect of the church's mission is to examine the natural signs and interpret them in light of the gospel. Catechesis seeks to assist believers to interpret these signs from a Christian perspective and to discover the manner in which creation and the human experience point to the mystery of God.

These are the four signs of the one source of catechesis, God revealing himself to the human family. It is the task of catechesis to reflect upon each of these signs and to explain how they point to the reality of God's self communication in the world.

Norms of Catechesis

The National Catechetical Directory establishes certain norms or criteria to ensure sound catechesis.[7]

1. Catechesis centers on the mystery of the Trinity and on Christ's saving mission.
2. Catechesis presents the Christian message in its entirety and in such a manner that the interrrelationship of its teachings is apparent. Catechesis must present the Christian message as an organic whole.
3. Catechesis acknowledges a certain hierarchy of truths. "These truths may be grouped under four basic heads:
   a. the mystery of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Creator of all things;
   b. the mystery of Christ the incarnate Word, who was born of the Virgin Mary, and who suffered, died and rose for our salvation;
   c. the mystery of the Holy Spirit, who is present in the

Church, sanctifying it and guiding it until the glorious coming of Christ, our Savior and Judge;

d. the mystery of the Church, which is Christ's Mystical Body, in which the Virgin Mary holds the pre-eminent place."[8]

4. Catechesis recognizes the context—cultural, linguistic, etc.—of those being catechized.
5. Catechesis interprets the present life in the light of revelation, while it disposes people for the life to come.
6. The bishop exercises the primary position of authority over catechetical programs within the diocese.

Catechesis is an invitation to maturing believers to remember their roots and to live their lives as persons who are related, dependent and responsible before God.

Summary

1. Jesus was sent by the Father to announce, serve and share the kingdom.
2. The church was founded to teach and do as Jesus did.
3. The church participates in the mission of the risen Lord by cultivating three interlocking ministries: the ministry of the word, the ministry of worship, and the ministry of service.
4. Catechesis is an integral component of the ministry of the word. Its goal is to assist the maturing believer's faith to become living, conscious and active through the light of instruction.
5. Catechesis is God-centered, Christ-centered and person-centered.
6. Catechesis is related to evangelization as an integral essential of the ministry of the word.
7. Revelation may be understood as a body of truths revealed by God. It may be viewed as God revealing himself.
8. There are four signs of catechesis that point to the self-communication of God in the world: biblical signs, liturgical signs, ecclesial signs, and natural signs.
9. *The National Catechetical Directory* has established norms or criteria to ensure sound catechesis.
10. Catechesis assists maturing believers to remember their roots and to live as persons who are related, dependent and responsible before God.

2. THE MATURING BELIEVER— A PERSON WHO IS ON THE WAY

Catechesis and Human Development

I have always been fascinated by the person of Don Quixote, the Man of LaMancha. This imaginary character is a man with a mission. At one point in his travels, Don Quixote meets Aldonza, the barmaid. Impressed deeply by her possibilities, he is eager to transform Aldonza into Dulcinea, "the Sweet One." However, like many people in contemporary society, our hero demands instant results. The transformation must be immediate. It is not surprising that Don Quixote is disappointed. True growth and conversion do not happen instantaneously. Yet, ultimately his attention, care and sensitivity are rewarded. Aldonza does grow into Dulcinea.

The picture of Jesus Christ presented in the gospels differs noticeably from that of Don Quixote. Unlike our fictional hero, Jesus acknowledges that growth and development is a gradual process. He grasps the significance of the principle of readiness. He understands that grace builds on nature. Unlike Don Quixote, Jesus Christ is both patient and persistent.

Catechists will profit significantly by identifying with the sentiments manifested by Jesus Christ in this regard. Catechesis cannot be concerned simply with the message to be shared. Catechists must be sensitive to the growth and development of the recipient of the message.[9] If catechists are to share the Christian message in a timely and effective manner, they should be familiar with the personal experience, emotional needs and intellectual ability of the recipient at a given stage.

The Stages of the Human Development of Children and Youth

A description of the characteristics of the child and young person may be structured in relation to the following levels: Primary (grades 1-3); Intermediate (grades 4-6); Junior High (grades 7-8); High School (grades 9-12).

The descriptions for each level are divided into four categories: intellectual, emotional, social, and moral. These descriptions are stereotypical, and may not apply to all students in all circumstances.

1. Primary Level
   a. Intellectual
      The child likes to be involved, active and doing. Curiosity is strong and imagination is lively. Unable to conceptualize, the child learns through the senses—needs to feel, touch, see, explore, manipulate—and is primarily interested in the world of the concrete. The child is able to repeat words, but doesn't always know their meaning. Although growing in the ability to distinguish between reality and fantasy, the child is interested in the magical and has a relatively short attention span. The gradual dawning of reason leads the child to question whether things are really true. The child slowly develops the faculty for reaching conclusions from observation and separate facts.
   b. Emotional
      The child is egocentric and self-centered and needs love, acceptance, security, and a sense of belonging. The child is emotionally responsive.
   c. Social
      The child is dependent upon the family and other adults. Parental guidance and support are essential. The child manifests a need to receive attention and gradually moves away from total dependence.
   d. Moral/Faith
      The child likes and needs structure and guidelines and matures in moral awareness and responsibility.

Possessing the ability to marvel, the child has a sense of wonder.

2. Intermediate Level
   a. Intellectual
      While developing the power to think abstractly, the child is interested in the concrete and the real. Attention span is increasing, and interests are broadening. The child manifests intense curiosity and thirst for knowledge. The child likes to collect and clarify information, is better oriented to grasp a sense of history, questions and is willing to experiment.
   b. Emotional
      The child is entering a period of transition, begins to discard childish patterns and is growing in control and cultivating a sense of responsibility. Toward the end of this period, the child tends to be restless, sensitive, moody and begins to become conscious of sexual development and curious about the opposite sex.
   c. Social
      The child is increasingly independent of adults and more dependent on peers; friendships are important and the child needs opportunities for group sharing and cooperation. Dependable and loyal, the child has an acute sense of justice and fairness. Hero worship is common.
   d. Moral/Faith
      Conscience is developing and the child begins to appreciate the importance of intention in relation to actions. The child is legalistic; rules and regulations are important. The child has a greater sensitivity to others, a growing sense of responsibility and seeks to develop personal attitudes and values.

3. Junior High Level
   a. Intellectual
      The child manifests an increasing ability to think and reason. The child reaches for knowledge, generalizes, forms insights, appreciates symbols and the mind begins to probe and ponder. The child begins to develop a critical spirit. The power of making synthesis grows. Because of the ability to analyze, interpret and

think in abstract terms, the child is interested in problems and discussions.

b. Emotional
The child is searching for a self-image during this period of confusion and change. Extremely concerned with self, the child tends to be insecure and insensitive.

c. Social
While the child desires the respect and understanding of adults, social involvement with the peer group is predominant and the standards of peers tend to be more important than those of the adult world. The child enters into close friendships with those of the same sex.

d. Moral/Faith
The child is interested in evaluating and integrating a new set of values and is growing in moral accountability. The child rejects childhood notions of God. A strong sense of social values is being cultivated.

4. High School Level

a. Intellectual
The young person is capable of deeper reasoning and understanding, can evaluate and analyze logically and needs to test, criticize and question. The ability to concentrate is growing in intensity and duration. The adolescent tends to vacillate between idealism and cynicism, and may make snap judgments.

b. Emotional
The young person is concerned with cultivating and expressing his or her self-image. The adolescent craves affection, acceptance, understanding, guidance, and needs to be secure, to belong, to be recognized, to achieve. The young person tends to be confused and insecure.

c. Social
The young person tends to be insecure about position in the peer group. The adolescent is more interested in the opposite sex, and is capable of sustaining interpersonal relationships. The young person needs significant adults.

d. Moral/Faith

The young person asks authentically religious questions and may experience a crisis of faith. The adolescent cultivates personal ideals and values, and may reject church laws and rules, viewed as impinging on freedom. The young person is concerned with social issues. Prayer tends to become more personal.

Guidelines for the Catechesis of Children and Youth

The National Catechetical Directory presents a number of guidelines for the catechesis of children and youth.[10] The following reflects the view of those guidelines.

1. If catechists are to understand and communicate with children and youth, they must listen to them with respect, be sensitive to their particular circumstances and be aware of their values.
2. The concern of catechesis is not simply to prepare children and youth for the future, but also to assist them to live their present lives as maturing Christians.
3. Catechesis should assist children and youth to know and respect other cultural, ethnic and racial groups.
4. Catechesis takes into account the fact that the child's comprehension and other powers develop gradually.
5. Catechesis provides experiences to apply the teachings of Christ to real life situations. It encourages the use of intellect, memory and imagination.
6. Catechesis stimulates children and youth to make an internal, prayerful response to God's love.
7. As children mature, catechesis assists them to observe, explore, interpret and judge their experiences, ascribe a Christian meaning to their lives, and act according to the norms of faith, hope and love.
8. Catechesis stresses that growth in faith includes an expanding desire for a deeper, more mature knowledge of the Christian message.

9. Catechesis is concerned with assisting youth to internalize authentic Christian values.
10. As adolescents grow in intellectual ability, catechesis assists them to grasp the interrelationship of religious truths, while establishing the rational foundations of faith.
11. Inasmuch as adolescents are better able to reason deductively, catechesis can employ systematic, formal methods of instruction and study more effectively. However, opportunities for concrete experiences of lived faith should be made available to the adolescent.
12. Catechesis recognizes that the entire faith community is important to the faith experience of children and youth. Parents, catechists and the community should exercise roles in the catechesis of children and youth.
13. Catechetical materials should be adapted to the stages of intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical development. Properly sequenced programs should present the Christian message, and the history of the church's response to it, in a manner appropriate to each age level. Specific truths should receive the emphasis appropriate to their significance in the total body of Christian teaching. Multi-year programs should be evaluated in their totality.
14. Catechetical programs should give satisfactory emphasis to doctrine and moral content, to efforts to develop community, to worship and to service to the faith community and society at large.

Summary

1. The ministry of catechists is enriched by their emulating the manner in which Jesus encounters people in the scriptures.
2. Catechesis is concerned with the message to be shared and with the ability of the recipient to understand.
3. The catechist is sensitive to the intellectual, emotional, social and moral/faith development of the maturing believer.
4. The primary-level child learns through the senses, and needs security and structure.
5. The intermediate-level child is developing the power to think abstractly, cultivating a sense of responsibility, has an acute sense of justice, and is legalistic.
6. The junior high-level youth is able to think abstractly, is searching for a self-image, being influenced by peer relationships and formulating personal values.
7. The high school-level youth tends to test and question, is confused and insecure, needs significant adults, and asks religious questions.
8. *The National Catechetical Directory* establishes helpful guidelines for the catechesis of children and youth.
9. A basic concern of catechesis is to assist children and youth to live their present lives as maturing Christians.
10. Since catechetical materials are adapted to the stages of development, multi-year programs should be evaluated in their totality.

3. THE CATECHIST: CALLED TO BE AND TO DO

In the memorable musical, "1776," there is a scene during which a rather despondent John Adams is standing alone in Independence Hall. He is a man with a vision and a dream. Yet, he wonders whether others have grasped his insight and have identified with his excitement. Expressing his feelings in song, Adams asks a three-fold question: "Is anybody there? Does anybody care? Does anybody see what I see?"

Jesus Invites the Catechist To Be and To Do

Long before John Adams, Jesus Christ announced, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life" (John 14:6). He invited his followers to identify with his person, to share his message, to proclaim his vision, to realize his dream.[11] He called believers to teach in his name empowered by his spirit.

Throughout the centuries, catechists have accepted the call of the Lord to be possessed by his love, penetrated by his truth, and permeated by his life so that they might share his person and his message, his vision and values.[12] Catechists recognize that they are called to become friends and disciples of the risen Lord so that they might be able to be and to do—to be witnesses of the transforming power of the gospel and to do his will by assisting others to mature in faith, hope and love. Catechists realize that they are called to cultivate a spirit of conviction, commitment and courage so that by word and deed they might announce the

good news with excitement and unfold with enthusiasm its significance for the maturing believer.

Qualities To Be Cultivated by the Catechist

There are certain qualities to be developed by catechists if they are to exercise their ministry responsibly.

1. Catechists are invited to be persons of faith.[13] The person of faith can be described as one who accepts the call to know the Lord, to trust in his continuing presence and to be a faithful disciple.

To know the Lord means to grow in appreciation and acceptance of Jesus; to become an intimate; to be touched deeply by his love and to respond in gratitude. To trust in his continuing presence means to believe that in good times or bad, in moments of exaltation or discouragement, the Lord will always be present to support and strengthen one whom he loves no matter how difficult the experience or challenging the event. To be a faithful disciple means to mature in one's understanding and acceptance of the good news, to share the gospel in its integrity and to live its demands regardless of the inconvenience entailed.

Catechists, as persons of faith, might echo the words of St. Paul: "All I want is to know Christ Jesus, to experience the power of his resurrection and to participate in the mystery of his suffering" (Phil. 3:10).

If catechists are to mature in faith, they must accept the invitation of Jesus when he says, "Come to me." Catechists must turn to the Lord with open minds, hearts and hands as they build their lives and ministry upon the firm foundation of prayer. They must value the significance of reading the scriptures meditatively, the importance of being united with the risen Christ at the table of the Eucharist, the requirement of accepting and appropriating the message of the Last Supper. As they come to know the Lord in the breaking of the bread, catechists are enabled to recognize the relationship between worshipping the Lord on the mountain of the eucharistic table and on the plain of dedicated service. In imitation of the prophet Samuel, catechists, in frequent

moments of prayer, must echo the timeless words, "Speak Lord, your servant is listening" (1 Sam. 3:10).

2. Catechists are invited to be witnesses of Jesus Christ and his gospel.[14]

To accept and fulfill that responsibility, catechists must mature in their understanding, appreciation and appropriation of the mission and message of Jesus Christ.

Jesus might be described as the supreme catechist. By word and deed, he presents a picture of the nature and purpose of the catechetical ministry. As the catechist, he reaches out to the total person he meets. He speaks to the mind, heart and soul of the beneficiary of his caring presence. Jesus proclaims a gospel of peace and justice, hope and joy, reconciliation and forgiveness. He shares his teaching regarding the source, the meaning and the end of life. He discusses the importance of accepting and implementing his vision, his values, his convictions, his attitudes. He stresses the necessity of cultivating a spirit of unity and service. He teaches the wonder and ramifications of the ineffable gifts of faith, hope and love.

As the catechist, Jesus reveals. He teaches the love of the Father, that each person is unique and valuable, that all, as children of the Father, are brothers and sisters, that all are called to be his friends and disciples, his prophets and witnesses.

As the catechist, Jesus affirms. He teaches that each person has been and is being gifted, that one's talents and gifts should be cultivated, that all are responsible and can make a positive difference.

As the catechist, Jesus guides. He teaches how to live and how to die, how to pray and how to play, how to relate and respond to the Father and to others.

As the catechist, Jesus heals. He responds to loneliness and despair, confusion and bewilderment. He alleviates suffering and pain. He attacks evil and sin.

Contemporary catechists, as witnesses, are comforted and challenged by the person and ministry of Jesus—comforted in that they, as disciples, are supported and strengthened in the exercise of ministry by the message of the Lord and challenged, in that they are expected to manifest a quality

of care in serving others that will give witness to that of the Lord.

Contemporary catechists must recognize that they are being sent by the risen Lord to go and teach in his name. Like Jesus himself, catechists are invited to reveal, affirm, guide and heal. Catechists reveal that God is love, that life is a gift, that each person, made in God's image, is valuable, that creation is worthy of respect, that God is to be worshipped in spirit and truth. Catechists affirm the talents and gifts of the young, that each person is irreplaceable, that each can make a difference by cultivating individual talents and skills, that each is called to serve the kingdom. Catechists guide youth, helping them to expand their vision, to appreciate God's love, to accept God's law, to celebrate God's forgiveness, to share God's peace. Catechists heal the young, assisting them to overcome their confusion, to sort out their anxieties, to develop their consciences, to recognize evil and to overcome its effect upon their lives and the lives of others. As persons who reveal, affirm, guide and heal, catechists are being sent to remind students that they are lovable in themselves; that people are more enriching than possessions; that love must eradicate hatred; that a commitment to peace must overcome violence; that cooperation is more humanizing than competition; that Christian principles must underlie projects; and that Christian growth must be the measure of progress for the believer.

If catechists are to be witnesses of Jesus Christ and his gospel, they must be desirous of coming to know and love the scriptures. They must recognize that the gospels have been written as an invitation to identify more closely with the person of the risen Lord, to assimilate his vision and to proclaim his values. Catechists are called to cultivate a scriptural spirituality so that, transformed by its spirit, they might become faithful friends and dedicated disciples of the Christ who is the way, the truth and the life.

3. Catechists are invited to be witnesses of the Church.[15] Before returning to the Father, the risen Lord commissioned the church to make disciples of all people and teach them to observe everything he had taught. Throughout the ages, the church has viewed the fulfillment of this mandate as

an integral dimension of its life and mission. If it is to be faithful to its calling, the church must proclaim and explain the person and message of Christ. In each age, committed believers have accepted the call to catechize. In doing so, they have participated in one of the fundamental responsibilities of the church. They have witnessed to the church as sent by Christ to teach his word. If contemporary catechists are to exercise their ministry responsibly, they must grasp the significance and accept the challenge of the following statements.

Catechists are called to believe in the church as founded by the risen Christ and enlivened by his spirit. They are expected to love the church as the body of Christ and the sacrament of Salvation. Catechists are invited to be in total communion with the church. They must participate actively in the life of the visible community as they strive to be agents of the Lord's power and sacraments of the Spirit's presence. Catechists must acknowledge that they participate in the catechetical mission of the church, and that catechesis is never a purely individual or autonomous activity. Catechists are expected to be faithful to the message entrusted to the church by Jesus Christ and to teach it with integrity.

If catechists are to be witnesses of the church and to exercise their catechetical ministry in collaboration with the whole church, they must acknowledge the need for continuing formation.[16] Each catechist is called to deeper formation, conversion and renewal in order to fulfill the catechetical ministry with dedication and zeal. Catechists should recognize that personal and professional formation must include a growing understanding and acceptance of the church's teaching. If catechists are to exercise their responsibility in a contemporary and effective manner, they must not only be persons of maturing faith, but also people who understand and implement the spirit and teachings of Vatican II.

Mary: Model for the Catechist

Catechists, as persons of faith, who witness to Jesus Christ and his church, can be enriched beyond measure by reflecting prayerfully upon the person of Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ.[17] She models truly significant attitudes that are worthy of emulation in the exercise of ministry.

Recall the hymn of praise, the "Magnificat," proclaimed by Mary at the home of her cousin Elizabeth. What does this prayer reveal about Mary? How does the message contained therein speak to catechists? What attitudes for ministry can be gleaned by catechists as they serve in the name of the Lord, empowered by his spirit.

1. Mary is the poor young woman. She proclaims that God is the source of her life. He sustains her existence. Mary is filled with a sense of wonder and awe. God loves her uniquely. He has called her personally. He has shared his grace with her specifically. Mary appreciates the mystery of God's presence in her life. She is completely attuned to that mystery. Mary pledges her fidelity and obedience to his call. She will be open to his Spirit. She will cooperate with his grace. Mary understands that she is never alone. She will walk within the light of his love.

   As the poor young woman, Mary not only acknowledges her dependence upon God, she realizes that she must share his message of peace and hope. Throughout her life, she participates in his salvific activity. She serves, she guides, she assists, she encourages. Mary unites her mind and heart with Jesus. His concerns are her concerns. His work is her work. Mary, the poor young woman, realizes that she is related, recognizes that she is dependent, and understands that she is responsible.

   Catechists, like Mary, cannot fulfill their calling unless they are willing to be numbered among God's poor. Catechists must recognize that they are completely dependent upon God's love. They must strive to know God's will and be eager to serve him unreservedly. Catechists must minister selflessly for the sake of the kingdom and those placed in their care. With patience and compassion,

catechists are called to inform and to form, to teach and to inspire, to guide and to heal, to accompany and to lead. As God's poor, catechists must acknowledge that they need one another if the gospel message is to be shared. They must cultivate among themselves a spirit of unity and love. They must support and encourage one another day by day. They must communicate and cooperate as they fulfill harmoniously a mutual calling. In doing so, catechists minister together as a poor people.

2. Mary is the joyful young woman. She is filled with thanksgiving. Convinced of God's presence and love, she is not afraid. She does not know despair or depression. As Mary experiences both joyful and sorrowful mysteries of her life, she reflects a consistent spirit of joy. Life has purpose. Love is a reality. God is present as Savior and Redeemer. God lives within her. He has come to her so that she might go to others as his servant. Mary is joyful because she realizes that she is to participate in God's plan. She has been chosen to share Christ with others. She has been called to identify with his ministry. Mary is joyful because she understands that she can continue to mature in union with Christ. Mary appreciates the possibilities of her life, the moments of grace. There is no reason to be sad. Joy is the truly realistic response to God's love.

   Catechists should appropriate the sentiments of thanksgiving and joy reflected in the "Magnificat." The catechist should proclaim the greatness of the Lord and should acknowledge that he who is mighty has done great things for them. Catechists have every reason to be a eucharistic people, to be thankful for God's saving love, and to appreciate his invitation to serve.

3. Mary is the young woman of prayer. Mary is open to the potential implications of God's call. She is committed to fulfilling the will of God. Prayer is essential. The "Magnificat" reflects so beautifully Mary's understanding of prayer. With sincerity and enthusiasm she proclaims her love for God. Mary acknowledges her absolute dependency upon his love for her. Mary appreciates that

even her fiat is due to her having been empowered by the Father.

Throughout her life, the spirit of this prayer would be Mary's constant companion. Her whole life would be a prayer—whether in word or deed, whether in reflection or response. Mary's mind and heart would be directed toward God in humility.

Like Mary, catechists must cultivate a spirit of prayer. As they fulfill a truly magnificent ministry, catechists turn to the Lord consistently to be enriched and encouraged, refreshed and renewed, strengthened and supported. Catechists listen attentively to God's voice and speak confidently to the Lord of creation. Catechists acknowledge that without the grace of the Lord, they could do nothing, but in unison with the living God, they can do all things.

As contemporary catechists exercise a divinely bestowed ministry, they might reflect upon and appropriate the joyful hymn of Mary.

"My being proclaims the greatness of the Lord.
My spirit rejoices in God my Savior.
For He has looked upon His servant in her lowliness.
He who is mighty has done great things for me.
Holy is His Name" (Luke 1:46-49).

Summary

1. Jesus calls believers to teach in his name, empowered by his spirit.
2. Catechists accept the invitation of the Lord to share his person and message, his vision and values.
3. Catechists must develop important qualities if they are to exercise a responsible ministry. The viability of the catechists' ministry is dependent upon their being persons of faith, witnesses of Jesus and his gospel, and witnesses of the church.
4. As persons of faith, catechists accept the call to know the Lord, to trust in his continuing presence and to be faithful disciples.
5. As persons of faith, catechists build their lives and ministry on the firm foundation of prayer.
6. As witnesses of Jesus and his gospel, catechists reveal, affirm, guide and heal.
7. As witnesses of Jesus and his gospel, catechists grow in their love for the scriptures.
8. As witnesses of the church, catechists believe in the church and participate in the catechetical mission of the church.
9. As witnesses of the church, catechists are involved in programs of continuing formation.
10. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is a magnificent model for the catechist.

4. THE FACULTY IN THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL: CALLED TO BE AND BECOME A PROPHETIC COMMUNITY

The Pentecost Event: Its Meaning and Significance

The Pentecost event is one of the truly remarkable experiences recorded in the pages of sacred scripture. The friends and disciples of Jesus had entered the upper room as persons who were confused and bewildered. Although they had been called to exercise a position of leadership within the church, the Spirit had not come to enable them.

The Acts of the Apostles records the grace-filled moment that was catalytic in transforming this aimless group of people into a truly prophetic community (Acts 2:1-42). The Acts capture the meaning and ramifications of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon those gathered in the upper room. It states that all were enveloped as by a great wind and tongues as of fire rested on the head of each. Immediately after having experienced the penetrating and permeating power of the Spirit, they were prepared as a prophetic community to proclaim the ineffable message that Jesus is Lord.

The faculty in the contemporary Catholic school can be enriched and encouraged by the Pentecost event. The message contained therein should speak directly to them. They have received the Holy Spirit in Baptism and Confirmation. They have been called to fulfill a public ministry

within the church. As friends and disciples of the Lord, faculty members in the Catholic school have been invited to exercise in their complementarity a prophetic ministry. A prophet is one who assists those served to cultivate their talents and gifts, to deepen their consciousness, to expand their horizons so that they can respond with conviction and courage to their present experience as they prepare creatively for the future.

Qualities To Be Cultivated by the Faculty

If the faculty within the Catholic school is to be and to become a prophetic community, each member must be willing and eager to cultivate and exemplify certain attitudes, including: poverty, responsibility, obedience, patience, humility, enthusiasm and trust. As teachers mature in the spirit of each, they will be enabled to respond to their vocation more faithfully.

Poverty —teachers must acknowledge their dependence upon the living God and pray for his grace.

Responsibility —teachers must accept the responsibility of cultivating a synthesis of faith and culture, as well as that of faith and life, regardless of the subject area they teach.

Obedience —teachers must appreciate that Jesus Christ is the Teacher as they share his person and message, his vision and values.

Patience —teachers must grasp that those whom they serve are persons who are on the way and in need of both comfort and challenge.

Humility —teachers must understand that they are called to make a unique, but partial contribution to the development of the student as a Christian person.

Enthusiasm —teachers must recognize that the true effectiveness of their ministry is related to the degree that they are in tune with the spirit of the Lord.

Trust —teachers must realize that they are never alone in the fulfillment of their vocation as they respond personally to the call to teach as Jesus did.

Although the total faculty in the school should be viewed as a prophetic community, the extent to which each member responds personally to the meaning, significance and ramifications of his or her calling is extremely important. The brilliance of the mosaic is dependent on the splendor of each component part.

The Distinctive Character of the Catholic School

If the school is to fulfill its responsibility as a viable educational agency of the church, the faculty must accept and act upon the supportive challenge presented in *To Teach As Jesus Did*.

> More than any program of education sponsored by the Church, the Catholic school has the opportunity and obligation to be unique, contemporary and oriented to Christian service: UNIQUE because it is distinguished by its commitment to the threefold purpose of Christian education (to communicate doctrine, form community and inspire service) and by its total design and operation which foster the integration of religious with the rest of learning and living; CONTEMPORARY because it enables students to address with Christian insight the multiple problems which face individuals and society today; ORIENTED to Christian service because it helps students acquire skills, virtues and habits of heart and mind required for effective service to others.[18]

The sentiments penned by the bishops indicate clearly their assessment of the value of the Catholic school. The faculty in the Catholic school is blessed beyond measure. Each member is invited to participate personally in the pastoral, educational mission of Jesus Christ and his church. All, as a prophetic community, are enabled to perform a truly

Christ-like service in contemporary society. If, however, faculty members are to exercise their responsibility with insight and integrity, they must understand clearly the identity, purpose and aims of the Catholic school. They must respect, safeguard and develop its distinctive character and mission.

The Vatican document, entitled *The Catholic School*, speaks directly to this matter when it states:

> If all who are responsible for the Catholic school would never lose sight of their mission and the apostolic value of their teaching, the schooling would enjoy better conditions in which to function in the present, and would faithfully hand on its mission to future generations. They themselves, moreover, would most surely be filled with a deep conviction, joy and spirit of sacrifice, in the knowledge that they are offering immeasurable young people the opportunity of growing in faith, of accepting and living its precious principles of truth, charity and hope.[19]

The Faculty: Sent to One Another

It should never be overlooked that each person on the faculty is expected to emulate the spirit manifested by the apostles in relation to one another upon their departure from the upper room. The members of the faculty are intended to be God's gifts to each other as they implement a common responsibility on behalf of students. Teachers are being sent by the risen Christ to enrich and encourage, refresh and renew, and strengthen and support one another. The care and compassion, and understanding and forgiveness, exemplified by the faculty in their interrelationships, symbolize their desire to cultivate the unity demanded by Christ at the Last Supper. The extent to which each teacher accepts the invitation to manifest a truly Christian sensitivity to his or her peers will influence significantly the possibility and quality of their witness as a prophetic community.

Programs should be developed that will enable faculty members to become aware of and sensitive to that essential dimension of their vocation, and assist them to accept

and implement their mutual calling to support and strengthen one another.

The Spiritual Formation of the Prophetic Community

It is always enriching to be in the presence of persons who know who they are, where they are going and how they will get there. It is always exciting to deal with persons who are committed to growth and transformation. The effectiveness of the Catholic school is dependent upon persons in leadership, whether administrators or teachers, who manifest these qualities. The Catholic school is blessed beyond measure when the faculty reflects and cultivates these attitudes. If these qualities and attitudes are to be cultivated by the faculty, teachers must turn to the person of Jesus Christ, the foundation upon which the Catholic school is built, to grasp their identity, understand their mission and appreciate their gifts.

The gospel account in Mark that records the events surrounding the Transfiguration is significant for the faculty. Jesus, realizing that the Apostles would be overwhelmed by the coming events during Holy Week, was eager to strengthen their faith. He invited three of their number to accompany him to the mount of the Transfiguration. While on the mountain, their emotional response to the happening progressed from fear and bewilderment to wonder and awe. Peter even suggested that they capture the joy of the moment by remaining in place. Jesus reminded them, however, that they must return to the people. Upon their arrival on the plain, Jesus was confronted by a discouraged group of disciples puzzled because their ministry appeared to be ineffective. Why were they unable to do what Jesus did? That was their question. Jesus revealed that their ability to emulate his spirit of service would be dependent upon their commitment to prayer and self discipline. Jesus indicated that all who serve in his name are called to worship on the mountain and on the plain, to cultivate the complementary reality of prayer and work.

During the Last Supper, Jesus taught that the effectiveness of the ministry of his followers would be dependent as well upon their willingness to cultivate unity, service and love with him and each other as they participated in the fulfillment of a common mission. He stressed that if they were to participate faithfully in his mission, they would be required to appropriate and assimilate the vision shared during that moment of grace.

It is imperative that those who minister in Catholic schools recognize that their involvement in programs of spiritual formation is crucial to their growth and development as a prophetic community.[20] Continuing spiritual formation assists teachers to respond generously to their calling to serve in the name of the Lord.[21] The faculty should gather frequently in a prayerful setting to cultivate their unity, strengthen their complementarity and renew their commitment to make manifest by word and deed their acceptance of the spirit of Pentecost.

Programs for Spiritual Development

There are a variety of programs that can be employed in enabling the spiritual formation of the faculty. A retreat or day of recollection offer excellent opportunities for the faculty to be prepared to initiate a school year. During the course of the year, days of recollection, inservice days and faculty meetings can be devoted to the spiritual formation of the faculty. During these gatherings, the faculty can reflect upon and discuss a number of timely themes, such as: the mission of the Catholic school; the ministry of the teacher in the Catholic school; the faculty as a prophetic community; the Catholic school, called to be a community of faith; Jesus Christ, our teacher and model; prayer and the teacher. The faculty should gather frequently at the "Table of the Lord," to be supported by his word and strengthened by the Eucharist. As they receive the "Bread of Life" and the "Bread for Life," they are strengthened in their resolve to teach as Jesus did.

The Importance of Catechetical Formation

It must be remembered that the spiritual formation of the faculty is to be viewed in relation to apostolic mission. Such being the case, the faculty should not only participate in moments of spiritual development, but also take part in programs of catechesis whereby they are assisted to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the teachings of the contemporary church as interpreted by the Vatican Council.[22] Within this context, it is imperative that the faculty receive adequate instruction in the social teachings of the church since they are an integral component of the Christian concept of life. The faculty can be assisted in this regard by attending conferences, workshops, institutes and inservice sessions sponsored by the diocese, by participating in programs conducted within the school or region, by attending courses and seminars sponsored by local Catholic colleges, and by personal reading and study.

Summary

1. The faculty in the contemporary Catholic school can be enriched and encouraged by the Pentecost event.
2. The faculty in the Catholic school have been invited to exercise in their complementarity a prophetic ministry.
3. Faculty members within the Catholic school are invited to cultivate and exemplify certain attitudes, such as: poverty, responsibility, obedience, patience, humility, enthusiasm and trust.
4. The bishops' document, *To Teach As Jesus Did*, states that the Catholic school has the opportunity and obligation to be unique, contemporary and oriented to Christian service.
5. The faculty is expected to respect, safeguard and develop the distinctive character and mission of the Catholic school.
6. Faculty members in the Catholic schools are sent to one another, as well as to the students.
7. The extent to which teachers manifest a truly Christian sensitivity to their peers will influence significantly the possibility and quality of their witness as a prophetic community.
8. The faculty must turn to Jesus Christ, the foundation upon which the Catholic school is built, to grasp their identity, understand their mission and appreciate their gifts.
9. The faculty must recognize that their involvement in programs of spiritual formation is crucial to their growth and development as a prophetic community.
10. The faculty must participate in programs of catechetical formation whereby they are assisted to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the teachings of the contemporary church as interpreted by the Vatican Council.

5. *HOME, SCHOOL, PARISH AND COMMUNITY: CALLED TO BE PARTNERS*

Isn't it intriguing? The gospels indicate that the Lord Jesus commissioned his apostles to go and teach in his name only after he had prayed that they might cultivate a spirit of unity (John 17:20-23). They were challenged by the master to become a dynamic community of faith, committed to encouraging and enriching one another in the exercise of a common mission. To that extent, then, the medium would be the message.

Parents, school, parish and community personnel can profit mutually by exemplifying Jesus' approach to the educational mission. First, the effectiveness of the school is influenced significantly by the degree its partnership with the parent is real and viable.[23] Inasmuch as parents are acknowledged as the primary educators of their children, the school's task is to assist in the fulfillment of that responsibility.[24]

Second, even though a Catholic school has some independent life of its own, the school successfully addresses its central purpose, growth in faith, by integrating the efforts of family, school, parish and the larger community.[25] Catholic school teachers do not effectively educate by isolation. Rather, they create learning experiences which foster the family dialogue and enter into the activities of parish and community. The classroom learning helps students integrate the concerns of home, parish and community life. Even though these various sources are sometimes complementary and other times are contradictory, faith is best formed in the integrative approach which acknowledges and draws

upon the cooperation of these formational sources.

The cultivation and implementation of a viable and creative partnership is dependent upon school personnel and parents. School personnel must recognize and encourage the right of parents to collaborate and cooperate with the school in the exercise of a common responsibility. Parents must acknowledge that their being partners with the school is not only a right but a duty. The exercise of that right and duty is related to three factors: the importance of the parents' understanding and acceptance of the nature and mission, philosophy and goals of the school; the necessity of parents' understanding and accepting the nature, goals and approach of the catechetical program in the school; and the significance of the parents' understanding and acceptance that they are called to an active partnership with the school.

The Nature and Mission, Philosophy and Goals of the Catholic School.

Parents should be assisted in understanding that the Catholic school participates in the pastoral/educational and evangelizing/catechizing mission of the church. It is intended to be a setting within which the gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed, explained and experienced.[26] While it is true that the Catholic school cultivates challenging academic standards, sound study habits and a balanced code of discipline, its ultimate purpose cannot be contained nor adequately explained by these important dimensions of its responsibility.

The document entitled, *The Catholic School*, states that the responsibility of the Catholic school is to achieve a synthesis of culture and faith and a synthesis of faith and life.[27] In the first instance, the Catholic school assists students to attain knowledge, acquire values and discover truth. In the second instance, the Catholic school assists children and youth to respond to God's love and to live responsibly in the church and in the world.

After having reflected upon the nature and mission of the Catholic school, parents should be guided to understand the philosophy and goals of the particular school so that they

might gain an appreciation of the manner in which that community demonstrates its understanding of its nature and mission.

The Nature, Approach and Goals of the Catechetical Program

Parents should be assisted in appreciating that if the Catholic school is to fulfill its mission responsibly, it must not only cultivate and reflect a truly Christian atmosphere, but also must provide an opportunity for every student to hear and understand the teachings of Christ as unfolded in scripture and tradition.[28]

Parents should be helped to understand that the catechetical program of instruction in the Catholic school is approached on three levels. On the message level, the teachings of Jesus Christ are presented as understood and interpreted by the Catholic tradition. On the value level, the catechist presents basic teachings as personally significant and valuable and invites students to recognize and appreciate their significance and value. On the relational level, the ultimate objective is to assist students to respond in faith; the achievement of this outcome is dependent ultimately upon the grace of God and the openness of the student.

The goal of the program, then, is that students accept the message as valuable to them as they grow in faith. Parents should be helped to grasp that the implementation of the catechetical program is sensitive to the psychological readiness of the students, to their ability to understand, and to their experiences, needs and questions.

The Call of the Parent To Be an Active Partner with the School

The document entitled, *The Catholic School*, speaks directly to this issue.[29] It emphasizes that parents who enroll their children in a Catholic school are not relieved of their duty to provide their children with a Christian upbringing. The document states that parents are bound to cooperate actively with the school by supporting the

educational efforts of the school and by utilizing the structures offered for parental involvement in the school so that they might make certain that the school remains faithful to the Christian principles of education.

The partnership of the parent with the school should be viewed from at least three perspectives: the parents' participation in general meetings; the parents' active interest in the catechetical program implemented within the school; and the parents' involvement in the direction of the school.

First, if parents are to cultivate a dynamic relationship with the Catholic school, they must be willing to participate in gatherings structured for their involvement. These may be bimonthly sessions for parents during which specific areas of mutual concern are discussed, a guest speaker is present, an evening of recollection is conducted, or when parents meet with teachers.

Second, if parents are to cultivate a dynamic relationship with the Catholic school, they must manifest an active interest in the catechetical program. Parents should attend sessions intended to assist them to understand the overview of the catechetical program, the goals and objectives of the program in a specific year and the methodology employed. At the same time, the sessions should present parents with an opportunity to question the program and to ensure that the total catechetical program presents the teachings of Christ and the church in their integrity. Then too, the sessions can assist parents to appreciate the importance and value of their nurturing a truly Christian environment within the home.

Third, the parents' involvement in the direction of the school is their right and their responsibility.

The school board, the education committee of the parish council, the home and school association, etc., are viable structures through which the parent is able to communicate, cooperate and collaborate with school leadership in the fulfillment of the mutual responsibility of ensuring educational excellence from the Christian perspective.

Parents who participate actively on those boards and committees represent all the parents. They help to ensure that the school is an environment within which a community

of faith that is living, conscious and active is being cultivated. At the same time, by their involvement, they are able to cooperate with school personnel as they design experiential models and pilot projects to improve educational standards and results. Then too, they can be helpful in relation to the formulation of a realistic budget, an equitable tuition scale for students and salary rate for teachers.

As far as school leadership is concerned, it also is essential that appropriate structures and sessions, like those alluded to above, be initiated and implemented wherever necessary so that the partnership between the home and school may be viable and creative.

Summary

1. Jesus Christ commanded those who would teach in his name to cultivate a spirit of unity.
2. The effectiveness of the school is influenced significantly by the degree to which a partnership with the parent is real and viable.
3. Teachers and parents must cooperate in enabling the students to understand and experience the relationship between the gift of faith and their daily lives.
4. School personnel must recognize and encourage the right of parents to collaborate and cooperate with the school in the exercise of a common responsibility.
5. Parents must acknowledge that their being partners with the school is both a right and a duty.
6. The parent should be assisted to understand that the Catholic school participates in the pastoral/educational and evangelizing/catechizing mission of the church.
7. The parent should be assisted to appreciate that the catechetical program of instruction in the Catholic school is approached on three levels: message, value, relational.
8. Parents should be expected to participate in gatherings structured for their involvement.
9. Parents should manifest an active interest in the school's catechetical program.
10. The parents' involvement in the direction of the school is their right and responsibility.

6. LITURGICAL PROGRAMS IN THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL: MOMENTS OF PREPARATION AND CELEBRATION

Liturgical Programs

I shall always remember the day on which I celebrated liturgy with the fifth graders in the parish school. They had selected the theme, chosen the readings and music and decorated the chapel with appropriate banners and drawings. The theme of the Mass was, "Thanksgiving for the Gift of Faith." As I studied the visuals prepared by the children, I was impressed by one in particular. It contained a representation of a rainbow, under which was written, "I believe in God because of rainbows." Isn't it true? Each person's faith is enabled to become living, conscious and active because various facets of the individual's experience come together in their complementarity. For example, as believers hear, celebrate and serve the word, they are enabled to mature as friends and followers of the risen Lord. As persons who exercise varying responsibilities in life gather to worship, they gain a deeper appreciation of the common call to witness and to prophecy in their mutuality.

Celebration of Eucharist within the School

If the Catholic school is to be a living, growing community of faith, the celebration of the Eucharist is essential. As students, parents and teachers gather to worship, they are comforted and challenged by the liturgy of the

word and refreshed and renewed by the liturgy of the Eucharist. In celebrating the Eucharist, they are reminded that they are related, dependent and responsible. At Eucharist, they are encouraged and enabled to identify more closely with the person and message of the risen Christ.

Students should be invited frequently to gather around the altar. The celebration of the Eucharist is a setting within which the good news is proclaimed so that it might take root in their lives and be reflected in their attitudes, actions and relationships. The celebration of the Eucharist is a graced moment within which the spirit of the Lord is present to enlighten their minds, transform their hearts and enliven their spirits. The celebration of the Eucharist is an occasion during which children and youth are assisted to understand and experience the nature and mission of the Christian community and in which they might recognize that the development of Christian community is a common responsibility of all who participate in the school.

Liturgies celebrated with students should manifest a keen sensitivity to their experiences, needs and concerns. The liturgy should speak to them and strengthen them as maturing believers who are on the way.

Preparation for the Celebration of the Eucharist

If the celebration of liturgy within the school is to be an enriching and enabling experience, those responsible for the celebration must be concerned about the preparation as well as the celebration. The preparation phase should include two components: continuing catechetical instruction dealing with the meaning, purpose and ramifications of liturgical worship; and, immediate preparation for the celebration itself.

In the first instance, the catechesis should assist students according to their ages and abilities to appreciate that liturgy is a moment when God is worshipped, community is cultivated and service is inspired. They should be helped to understand that during liturgical celebrations, believers, in union with the risen Christ and the community, go to the

Father to express worship, praise and thanksgiving. Catechists should enable students to recognize that during liturgical celebrations, strengthened by God's grace, believers recommit themselves to participate more actively in the growth of the community to which they have been called, and rededicate themselves to accept more fully the vision and values of Jesus Christ in order to serve people in need with increased dedication and zeal.

Secondly, students should be invited to participate in the process of immediate preparation for the celebration. This phase of preparation should include choosing a theme, selecting the readings and music, formulating the prayers of the faithful, preparing the environmental setting, within which the liturgy will be celebrated and determining the ministers. Then too, depending on the ages, a small number of students might examine the readings beforehand and share two or three ideas with the preacher, assisting him to grasp how the texts relate to their lives, concerns, hopes and needs.

Why involve students in the preparation of liturgy? Such involvement will increase the possibility of their active participation in the liturgy. Also, by being involved actively in the preparation, students are enabled experientially to become even more familiar with the interrelationship of the components of the Mass, with the meaning and significance of ritual and with the value of the signs and symbols employed.

The Vatican document entitled, *Directory for Masses with Children*, issued in 1973, is an excellent resource for persons preparing liturgical celebrations for those at the primary and intermediate levels.[30] The Directory describes the relationship between liturgy and the life of the student, establishes guidelines for the celebration of liturgy with students and indicates acceptable and viable approaches that may be employed in the celebration.

Prayer Services

While acknowledging the central place of the sacraments for public prayer, the church encourages a variety of prayer forms. For instance, the Liturgy of the Hours offers both a prayer and a prayer format. Teacher innovation on this official prayer of the church allows for a variety of scriptural readings and prayer lengths suitable to the wide range of classroom needs.

In these prayer services, which can be led by teachers and students, there is, first of all, a readily accessible means for praising God. Even a brief prayer service structured around an opening song, scripture reading, brief reflection and closing prayer, is a way for a class to join in the church's continual need to praise the Lord.

Secondly, class prayer services are an effective way to catechize. Prayer services can include cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects of learning. They can employ repetition, alternating group responses, echoing of responses, song, movement, graphics, lighting effects, drama and, in short, almost any technique imaginable for a desired catechetical learning. In comparison with other classroom efforts, prayer services may be one of the most effective ways to teach certain affective aspects about relationship with God, for example, reverence, joy, familial comfort and trust.

When preparing and celebrating prayer with children or youth, it is essential to balance one's personal awareness of the divine and human presences within the event. If the divine presence is emphasized to the exclusion of the human, the liturgy may ignore the need to be relevant and vital, fail to connect worship with life, and create the impression that God is distant and disinterested. If the human presence is emphasized to the exclusion of the divine, the participants may be given the impression that worship's value is determined by whether or not someone gets something out of it, that it is mainly a human gathering, or that worship is secondary to social concerns. In order to avoid an excess on either side, it is crucial that a balance between the divine and human be reflected in catechesis, preparation and celebration.

Whether considering eucharistic or other prayer services, our approach to celebration with students in the parish school has been enriching and encouraging, as mentioned earlier. Each month, the students choose a theme, which is employed during the month as Mass is celebrated with each grade individually. Students, teachers and parents participate in each grade level celebration. At the end of the month, all of the students gather together with their teachers and parents to celebrate the theme as a total community. The students, teachers and parents have participated enthusiastically during the 10 years that this approach to liturgical celebration has been implemented in the parish school.

Summary

1. The celebration of the Eucharist is essential if the Catholic school is to be a living, growing community of faith.
2. Liturgies celebrated with students should manifest a keen sensitivity to their experiences, needs and concerns.
3. The preparation phase for the celebration of the Eucharist should include two components: continuing catechetical instruction dealing with the meaning, purpose and ramifications of liturgical worship; and immediate preparation for the celebration itself.
4. Catechesis should assist children and youth, according to their ages and abilities, to appreciate that liturgy is a moment when God is worshipped, community is celebrated and service is inspired.
5. Students should be invited to participate in the process of immediate preparation for the celebration of the Eucharist.
6. When preparing and celebrating liturgy with students, it is essential to balance one's personal awareness of the divine and human presences within the event.
7. Preparation for and celebration of sacraments is a parish and a family event.

7. THE METHOD: MEANS TO UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONSE

Jesus Christ: Model for Method

As catechists in a Catholic school prepare to fulfill their responsibility, they can profit significantly from a prayerful reflection upon the scriptural event within which the risen Christ travels the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-33). The risen Lord meets two disciples as they journey from Jerusalem. They are overwhelmed and devastated by the news that Jesus has been crucified. Their experience is important. Christ invites them to examine that aspect of their lives. He then offers them an interpretation of the event of his death as he quotes from the Old Testament. The risen Lord then presents them with the opportunity to reflect upon both their experience and the interpretation that explains the event. After reflection, the two disciples formulate a response at the time of the breaking of the bread. The final outcome is their witness to Christ's effective teaching. They run to tell others about the good news they have learned.

The approach or process of the risen Lord in the Emmaus story should be helpful to catechists in the Catholic school. Christ entered into the experience of his disciples and shared the good news. The disciples, after reflection, discovered the significance of the message upon their experience. Their response was total: it was a response of their whole being, mind, heart and will. It is a response expressed in cognition, attitudes and practice.

The Catechetical Process

Contemporary catechists, in emulation of the risen Christ, are called to implement a catechetical process that incorporates four elements.

1. Human experience—Catechesis is directed to persons in the context of their individual lives. It is sensitive to the person's journey of faith. It is concerned about the person's past experiences, present attitudes and needs, and future hopes. It is eager to utilize life experiences as the basis for listening and responding to Christian teaching.
2. Message—Catechesis relates the Christian message to the person's experience. The catechist shows how the scriptures and teachings of the church shed light upon that experience. In sharing the message, the most effective techniques and resources available should be employed. This dimension of the catechetical process is concerned with teaching and being informative.
3. Reflection/Discovery—The catechetical process leads persons to internalize the message and to consider how it could change their lives if they accept and live it. This part of the process assists people to understand their reactions to the message and to view the challenges and implications of that message. This dimension of the catechetical process is concerned with persons internalizing the message so that they might be involved in ongoing conversion.
4. Response—The catechetical process invites individuals to respond to the Christian message as it relates to their lives and experiences. It invites them to respond in acts of service and worship.

Method and Technique

Method may be described as the means to an end. Its objective is to assist the student to understand and respond to the aspect of the Christian message being shared.[31] When determining the method to be employed, catechists should consider the content of the lesson, the ages and abilities of the students, their particular

circumstances and experiences, the external teaching conditions and the personality of the catechist. In preparing a lesson, catechists should be clear on the content of the lesson and the response or attitude they hope to stimulate and cultivate in students.

In presenting a lesson, catechists should employ a method that embraces all the essential steps in the teaching process. The catechetical process of Jesus Christ certainly offers a viable model in that regard.

Techniques are all the activities that are at the service of the method and contribute to its being truly effective. They are intended to assist catechists in the achievement of their goal. The techniques should be employed according to the ages and abilities of the students being catechized. Among the techniques that may be used at the elementary or high school levels, are the following:

Elementary Level	**High School Level**
Bible narrative	Oral presentation
Story telling	Discussion
Questioning	Problem-solving
Films, filmstrips, slides, video	Media
Chalkboard, flannelboard	Questioning
Pictures	Projects
Problem-solving	Testing
Projects	
Dramatization	
Games	
Testing	

The National Catechetical Directory

The National Catechetical Directory lists five elements of catechetical methodology.[32]

1. The message is to be presented in its entirety while also being expressed according to the circumstances and ability of those being catechized.
2. Catechesis is not limited to one methodology. However, catechists are expected to cultivate a learning environment that will stimulate students to respond to the Christian message and integrate it more fully into their lives.

3. Catechists should recognize the values and complementary nature of the inductive and deductive methods. The inductive approach proceeds from the visible, sensible experiences of the person and leads to more general conclusions and principles. The deductive approach begins with a general principle and applies it to the life of the person being catechized. Catechists should appreciate that the deductive approach is enriched when preceded by the inductive.
4. Catechists should recognize the value of experiential learning. In stimulating students to reflect on the Christian message in relation to their concerns and questions, hopes and anxieties, catechists can assist them to recognize and appreciate the relevance of the message to their lives. Catechists also should provide appropriate experiences for students. In doing so, catechists should employ cognitive and affective techniques that will reach the whole person.
5. Catechists should not underestimate or ignore the value of memorization in the catechetical process. Throughout the ages, certain prayers, formulas and practices have been memorized. While memorization is an important element in contemporary catechesis, the practice should be adapted to the level and ability of the student. If it is introduced at an early age and cultivated gradually, it can contribute to the person's continued growth in understanding and living the faith.

The National Catechetical Directory lists a number of prayers, formulas and practices that should be memorized at the appropriate time.

1. Prayers such as the Sign of the Cross, Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Apostles' Creed, Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity, Act of Contrition.
2. Factual information contributing to an appreciation of the place of the word of God in the life of the church and the life of the Christian through an awareness and understanding of: the key themes of salvation history; the major personalities of the Old and New Testaments; and certain biblical texts expressive of God's love and care.

3. Formulas providing factual information regarding worship, the church year, and major practices in the devotional life of Christians, including the parts of the Mass, the list of the sacraments, the liturgical seasons, the holy days of obligation, the major feasts of our Lord and our Lady, the various eucharistic devotions, the mysteries of the rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Stations of the Cross.
4. Formulas and practices dealing with the moral life of Christians including the commandments, the beatitudes, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the theological and moral virtues, the precepts of the church and the examination of the conscience.[33]

Points of Method To Remember

Catechists should be sensitive to the following points in presenting the message.

1. Primary Level
   a. The message should be presented as concretely as possible.
   b. Children should be approached on both the affective and intellectual levels.
   c. Children who think with their senses, should be involved actively in the learning process.
   d. A variety of learning activities should be employed in sharing the message.
   e. The lesson should be replete with examples from the children's world and experiences.
   f. Children should be given opportunities to share their thoughts and feelings.
   g. There should be a balance in the lesson between listening activities and doing activities.
2. Intermediate Level
   a. The ability of students to explore a topic and relate it to their experiences should be cultivated as they are encouraged to participate personally in the catechetical process.
   b. Students should be encouraged to work on group projects and discussion.
   c. Students should be encouraged to be involved in

problem-solving activities.

d. Students should be introduced to biblical characters as heroes.
e. Students, who tend to be legalistic at this age, should be assisted to understand the spirit behind the commandments and other laws.
f. Catechists should refer to current events as revealing the main themes of the Christian message.
g. Students should be expected to memorize doctrinal formulas after they have been assisted to understand them.

3. Junior High Level
   a. Catechists should be patient and just in dealing with youth who tend to be insensitive, critical and seemingly closed during this period of their lives.
   b. Catechists should assist students who are eager to cultivate friendships, to recognize the importance and value of developing a friendship with Jesus Christ.
   c. Catechists should assist students who tend to be egocentric, to recognize and appreciate the relationship between the Christian message and their lives, needs, concerns and questions.
   d. Catechists should encourage students to become involved in independent activities, such as research in relation to a topic, problem-solving, etc.
   e. Catechists should offer opportunities for field trips and service projects in assisting students to understand and respond to the Christian message.
   f. Catechists should guide students to investigate the relationship between the gospel and social issues.
   g. Catechists should present an historical treatment of the good news.
4. High School Level
   a. Catechists should set clear goals and outline procedures for achieving them.
   b. Catechists should be witnesses of the gospel, who respect the students' freedom.
   c. Catechists should encourage problem-solving and group discussion.
   d. Catechists should balance the theoretical and the prac-

tical in the class.

e. Catechists should employ media in examining issues of life, meaning, relationships, etc., from a Christian perspective.
f. The message should be related to the personal needs, questions, concerns of the students.
g. Catechists should challenge students intellectually and insist that they reason logically.

Summary

1. The Emmaus event presents a timely insight into Jesus' teaching method.
2. The catechetical process incorporates four elements: human experience, message, reflection/discovery, and response.
3. The objective of method is to assist the maturing believer to understand and respond to the aspect of the Christian message being shared.
4. Techniques are the activities that contribute to the effectiveness of the method.
5. Techniques should be employed according to the age and ability of the person being catechized.
6. *The National Catechetical Directory* lists elements of catechetical methodology to be employed by catechists in the exercise of ministry.
7. The message should be presented as concretely as possible at the primary level.
8. Children at the intermediate level should be encouraged to participate in group projects and discussions.
9. Catechists should assist junior high students to recognize the relationship between the gospel and their lives.
10. Catechists who serve at the high school level, should be witnesses of the gospel, who respect the freedom of the students.

8. A MAGNIFICENT MOSAIC: CATECHETICAL PROGRAM IN THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL — COGNITIVE AND AFFECTIVE OBJECTIVES

The Church: Sent To Teach in Christ's Name

Shortly before the Ascension, the resurrected Lord commissioned his apostles, and through them the church, to continue his mission of love and service, of evangelizing and catechizing (Matt. 28:16-20). He challenged them to teach everything he had commanded. He comforted them with the assurance that he would be with them in good times and bad. In other words, the church, from the moment of its birth, has been sent to share the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Contemporary catechists, like their predecessors in the catechetical ministry, are being sent to share the basic teachings of Jesus Christ and his church in their integrity. *The General Catechetical Directory* states clearly that catechesis must present faithfully the entire treasure of the Christian message.[34] However, it acknowledges as well the necessity of catechists being sensitive to the personal and cultural conditions of those being catechized. The Directory points out that the content should be shared in accordance with the ability of those being catechized to understand it. It states that as students mature, they are better able to accept and

respond to a more developed and detailed presentation of the basic teaching.

The General Catechetical Directory[35] and the *National Catechetical Directory*[36] contain an inclusive listing of the basic teachings of Jesus Christ and his church. While each of these truths need not be presented in a specific grade, they must be incorporated into the total catechetical program. It follows, then, that in evaluating the curriculum, one should evaluate the multi-year program in its totality.

The Message To Be Shared

Cognitive and affective objectives for grades one through eight are described in the NCEA document entitled, *A Curriculum Guide for Continuous Progress in Religious Education.*[37] Objectives for the high school level are listed in *High School Religious Curriculum Resource Guide,*[38] that I formulated for the schools in the Archdiocese of Boston.

Since many diocesan offices have created their own curriculum guidelines, there are resources available. It is recommended that you check with your own diocesan office.

FOOTNOTES

1. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Sharing the Light of Faith: National Catechetical Directory for Catholics in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1979), para. 30.
2. *Decree on the Bishops Office in the Church*, in Walter Abbot, ed., *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: America Press, 1966), para. 14.
3. *Sharing the Light of Faith*, para. 35.
4. Pope John Paul II, *On Catechesis in Our Time* (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1979), para. 19.
5. *Sharing the Light of Faith*, paras. 49-55.
6. *Ibid.*, paras. 42-46.
7. *Ibid.*, para. 47.
8. Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, *General Catechetical Directory* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1971), para. 43.
9. *Sharing the Light of Faith*, paras. 173-174.
10. *Ibid.*, para. 181.
11. *On Catechesis in Our Time*, para. 10.
12. *Ibid.*, paras. 11-13.
13. *Sharing the Light of Faith*, para. 206.
14. *Ibid.*, para. 207.
15. *Ibid.*, para. 208.
16. *General Catechetical Directory*, paras. 111-114.
17. *Ibid.*, para. 68.
18. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *To Teach As Jesus Did: A Pastoral Message on Catholic Education* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1972), para. 106.
19. Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School* (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1977), para. 87.
20. Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1982), para. 68.
21. *Ibid.*, para. 70.
22. *Sharing the Light of Faith*, para. 215.
23. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Teach Them* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1976), para. 28.
24. *Declaration on Christian Education*, in Walter Abbott, ed., *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: America Press, 1966), para. 8.
25. *Sharing the Light of Faith*, para. 232.
26. *The Catholic School*, para. 34.
27. *Ibid.*, para. 27.
28. *On Catechesis in Our Time*, para. 69.
29. *The Catholic School*, para. 73.

30. Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, *Directory for Masses with Children* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1974).
31. *To Teach As Jesus Did*, para. 18.
32. *Sharing the Light of Faith*, para. 176.
33. *Ibid.*
34. *General Catechetical Directory*, para. 38.
35. *Ibid.*, paras. 47-69.
36. *Sharing the Light of Faith*, paras. 82-111.
37. National Catholic Educational Association, *A Curriculum Guide for Continuing Progress in Religious Education* (Washington, D.C.: NCEA, 1972).
38. *High School Religion Curriculum Resource Guide* (Boston: Catholic School Department, 1981).

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Sullivan, Thomas. *Focus on American Catechetics: A Commentary on the General Catechetical Directory*. Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Educational Association, 1972.

Wojcicki, Father Ted and Convey, Brother Kevin. *Teachers, Catholic Schools and Faith Community: A Program of Spirituality*. New York: LaJacq Publishing, Inc., 1982.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Groome, Thomas. *Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980. The author introduces a practical methodology and suggests helpful examples for implementation.

Hofinger, Johannes, S.J. *Our Message is Christ: The More Outstanding Elements of the Christian Message*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Fides Publishers, 1974. Father Hofinger offers a clear presentation of the basic teachings viewed as good news for Christians.

McBride, Alfred, O.Praem. *Creative Teaching in Christian Education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1978. Father McBride's book is an excellent resource covering a wide range of areas that will be extremely helpful to the catechist.

National Catholic Educational Association. *The Qualities and Competencies of the Catechist: A Two Part Program of Teacher Formation*. Washington, D.C.: NCEA, 1983. This is an excellent preservice and inservice resource for catechists. It includes a section that assists catechists to reflect upon, pray about and cultivate truly essential qualities. Its second section aids catechists to evaluate and cultivate their professional competencies.

_____. *Developing the Competencies of the Religion Teacher*. Washington, D.C.: NCEA, 1974. Although the book was written 10 years ago, it is an extremely helpful resource for persons who are eager to develop their competencies as catechists.

Reichert, Richard. *A Learning Process for Religious Education*. Dayton, Ohio: Pflaum Publishing, 1975. This helpful and practical work discusses and explains the relationship between learning and growth in faith.

Sork, Rev. David, Boyd, Don and Sedano, Sister Marvja. *A Catechist Formation Book: Growing and Sharing*. New York: Paulist Press, 1981. The authors assist the readers to cultivate their faith while developing their skills and competencies as catechists.

Timmerman, Sister Margaret, M.H.S.H. *How to Be a Very, Very, Very Good Catechist*. W. Mystic, Conn.: Twenty-Third Publications, 1981. The book is intended to assist the beginning catechist in the fulfillment of his or her responsibility.

Warren, Michael, ed. *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics*. Winona, Minn.: Christian Brothers Publications, 1983. The author compiles a superb collection of articles and documents charting the history and evolution of the modern catechetical movement.

SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THIS BOOK

There are many uses for this series of booklets on the Catholic school. Colleges will find them a valuable resource in preservice formation programs for Catholic school teachers. Graduate schools will find them helpful in the preparation of Catholic school administrators. Principals will find in them a rich resource for inservice of teachers and boards of education. Individual Catholic educators will find in them a unique and challenging help to their own personal and professional growth.

Plans that differ in length and format are offered to those who will be using these booklets. These plans are arranged for easy adaptation by users according to their purpose and needs.

Extended Format: This plan is for the college teacher, the principal or group leader who can spend two or more sessions on the material.

Mix and Match: This format gives users a choice of openings, of middles and of endings. It invites users to design their own model, choosing suggested components according to the interests and readiness of participants and the time available.

Planned Format—Single Session: The single session format is arranged for one 60-90 minute session. It provides a step-by-step plan for the busy leader, even estimated time allotments.

Independent Study: Educators motivated to explore the booklet and/or teachers assigned to study it will find suggestions in this plan for interacting with the content, for reflecting on its meaning and for internalizing its message.

It is hoped that Catholic leaders will find the planning formats a beginning—an incentive to go beyond in their search

for ways to help Catholic school teachers grasp the distinctiveness of their school and of their ministry.

Orientation

The excellent content of this booklet can be brought to life by the involvement and witness of people who have internalized and enfleshed its content and values; namely, successful religion teachers and parents, who sacrifice to make it possible for the children to have the experience of religion teacher and religion class.

EXTENDED FORMAT

OPTION A:

Session 1: After participants have read this book, leader or guest lecturer makes a presentation expanding and elucidating the content followed by a period for questions and general discussion.

Session 2: Ask a panel of experienced religion teachers to point out the practical implications for the Catholic school teacher from the chapters on the believer, the catechist, the faculty and the home.

Session 3: In small groups, ask the participants to plan one of the following: a faculty renewal experience; a religion class; or an all-school liturgy.

Session 4: Ask participants to visit a Catholic school to observe a master teacher. After the observation, conduct a discussion asking participants to connect what they observe with what they had read in the text.

OPTION B:

Session 1: Invite a panel of experienced teachers to make an inspirational presentation giving witness to the importance of the catechetical mission, the love of children as maturing believers, the personal spiritual growth

resulting for the teacher as an outcome of the ministry, the support and inspiration of the faculty believing community.

Session 2: Invite a panel of parents to speak to the teachers about the importance of the religion teacher to them and the hopes they have for the Christian formation of their children.

Session 3: Using available catechetical teacher manuals and student materials, ask each participant to select a religion lesson and write a plan for teaching it. If possible, have participants teach the lesson to a group of students with other participants observing and giving feedback after the lesson.

OPTION C:

Select a variety of activities from the **Mix and Match** section to be expanded into several sessions.

MIX AND MATCH

Step 1: Prayer

Step 2: Openings—Choose from among the following:

a. In pairs, ask participants to briefly tell about the best religion teacher they have known.
b. Play an audio or video tape of two or three parents telling of the hopes they have for the Christian formation of their children and the importance of the religion teacher.
c. Skim the table of contents and formulate two questions you hope will be answered during the session.
d. In groups of three, share a value you hold about the teaching of religion.
e. List three qualities you believe to be important for a teacher of religion.
f. What do you predict is distinctive about methods of teaching religion, compared to methods of teaching other content material?
g. What are the hopes and expectations that parents you know have concerning their child's religion teacher

and the religion class?

Step 3: Middle—Choose from among the following:

a. Have the leader or a guest speaker present a lecture expanding and elucidating the content, followed by questions and general discussion.
b. Invite a panel of experienced religion teachers to make brief presentations on each of the chapters of the book.
c. Invite a master teacher and a small class of students to present a demonstration religion class to be observed and then discussed by the participants.
d. Ask participants in a hands-on session to examine available religion textbooks and teacher manuals and conduct a discussion about these materials.
e. Using sections of available teacher manual materials, ask each participant to write a plan for teaching a religion class; conduct a discussion of the experience of preparing to teach a class.
f. Have leader or guest speaker compare methods for teaching a religion class to methods used for teaching other content.
g. Invite a panel of experienced religion teachers to make an inspirational presentation, giving witness to the importance of the catechetical mission, love of children as maturing believers, the personal spiritual growth for the teacher as an outcome of the ministry, the support and inspiration of the believing community of faculty and parents.

Step 4: Endings—Choose one of the following:

a. In groups of three, ask participants to share the important concepts and values of this session for each of them.
b. Design a mini-celebration that ties together the content.
c. Ask participants to write a summary paragraph of what they have learned.
d. Ask participants to list three (3) distinctive characteristics of the teaching of religion, compared to the teaching of other content.
e. In large groups, summarize themes of this topic.

f. Ask participants to write one sentence about each of the chapter headings, expressing an insight or conviction as a result of studying this material.
g. What are the implications of this book for you as a Catholic school teacher?

Step 5:—Closing Prayer

PLANNED FORMAT—SINGLE SESSION

Minutes		
	Step 1:	In preparation for the session, ask participants to read the book.
8	Step 2:	To begin the session, read and reflect on the word from scripture, Rom. 10:13-15, and the church; "To Teach as Jesus Did," #104. Sing "Go Tell it on the Mountain" or some suitable song.
10	Step 3:	Invite an experienced religion teacher to make an inspirational presentation giving witness to the importance of the catechetical mission, the love of children as maturing believers, the personal spiritual growth for the teacher as an outcome of the ministry, the support and inspiration of the believing community of faculty and parents.
30	Step 4:	Invite a master teacher and small class of students to present a demonstration religion class to be observed by participants.
20	Step 5:	In large groups, discuss the observation of the demonstration class using the content of the chapter on methods.
10	Step 6:	Ask the participants to list distinctive characteristics of teaching religion, compared to the teaching of other content.
2	Step 7:	Close session by rereading the scripture, Rom. 10:13-15.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Step 1: Read and reflect on the scripture, Rom. 10:13-15. In your own words, pray for the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit as you study the material.

Step 2: Scan the table of contents and formulate a question you have about each chapter.

Step 3: After reading each chapter, write a brief paragraph expressing key insights and convictions emerging from your study.

Step 4: Interview a couple, asking their expectations of the religion teacher and the religion class in the Christian formation of their children.

Step 5: Interview a master religion teacher on the following topics: why they spend their lives teaching religion; children as maturing believers and what they learn from them; the impact of ministry on personal spiritual growth; the support experienced from the believing community of the faculty and the parents.

Step 6: Observe a class of an experienced religion teacher and critique it in light of the context of the chapter on methods.

Step 7: Talk with a friend, telling what you have learned from your study.

Step 8: Spend 15 minutes of quiet time with God in conversation/listening centered on the ministry of the religion teacher.

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11. *Methods of Teaching in the Catholic School*
    Sister Mary Leanne Welch, PBVM

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